

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 MADRID 00806

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: THE PSOE'S COMING OF AGE

REF: STATE 05274; MADRID 0385; MADRID 4939

1. SUMMARY: THE PSOE BELIEVES THE TIDE OF HISTORY,
CONDITIONS IN SPAIN, ITS OWN POLITICAL CAPACITY, AND, IN
ITS VIEW, UCD'S INABILITY TO CRYSTALLIZE AS A COHERENT
PARTY OR GOVERN EFFECTIVELY WILL BRING IT INTO OFFICE
BY MID-1979. ALTHOUGH THE PSOE EXAGGERATES ITS OWN VIRTUES
AND CONTINUES TO UNDERESTIMATE SUAREZ AND UCD, A PSOE-
LED GOVT BY MID-1979 IS A POSSIBILITY, THOUGH HARDLY
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THE "INEVITABILITY" POSITED BY THE PARTY LEADERSHIP.
2. SINCE THE JUNE 15, 1977 ELECTIONS, WHICH CONVERTED
THE PSOE INTO THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION FORCE AND THE
GOVERNING ALTERNATIVE TO UCD, THE PSOE HAS PLAYED A
RESPONSIBLE ROLE IN SPANISH POLITICS. THE LEADERSHIP HAS
MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN PARTY BUILDING AND APPEARS
ALSO TO HAVE CONSOLIDATED ITS POSITION AT THE PSOE

HELM, ALTHOUGH THIS WILL BE SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION AT THE PARTY'S BIENNIAL CONGRESS LATER THIS YEAR. BUT THE PARTY'S PERIODIC LAPSES HAVE TESTIFIED TO ITS LACK OF EXPERIENCE, AND ITS SOMETIMES AMBIGUOUS AND EVEN INTERNALLY CONTRADICTORY BEHAVIOR HAS UNDERLINED THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE PSOE'S RELATIVELY RADICAL BASE AND ITS RELATIVELY MODERATE ELECTORATE. A CONCOMITANT CONTRADICTION IS THE PSOE'S SHORT-TERM SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL CONSOLIDATION AND REFORM AND ITS CONTINUING LONG-TERM CALL FOR FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS.

3. THE PSOE WILL NOT SOON RENOUNCE ITS MARXISM OR ITS LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES, MANY OF WHICH, SUCH AS NATIONALIZATION OF HEAVY INDUSTRY AND BANKS AND THE IMPLANTATION OF WORKER SELF-MANAGEMENT ("AUTOGESTION") ARE COMPLEX, CONTROVERSIAL, AND DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT. WHILE THE PARTY LEADERSHIP IS UNDERSTANDABLY THIN IN SOME AREAS, ESPECIALLY IN THE FOREIGN POLICY FIELD (WE WILL BE DEALING WITH PSOE FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE), IT PROBABLY DOES POSSESS THE PERSONNEL NECESSARY TO GOVERN RELATIVELY EFFECTIVELY. HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL PRESSURES ON SUCH A SOCIALIST GOVT, BOTH FROM WITHIN THE PARTY AND FROM WITHOUT, WOULD BE A SEVERE TEST AT THIS RELATIVELY EARLY STAGE OF A LEADERSHIP STILL UNTRIED IN POWER. END SUMMARY.
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4. STEPS TO POWER? THE PSOE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH GREAT OPTIMISM, EVEN A SENSE OF PREDESTINATION, BUOYED BY ITS JUNE 1977 ELECTORAL PERFORMANCE AND BY WHAT IT CONSIDERS ITS OWN MARKED POLITICAL ASSETS AND UCD'S DISABLING LIABILITIES. PARTY LEADERS BELIEVE THE PSOE WILL COME TO OFFICE BY MID-1979, PREFERABLY AS THE CULMINATION OF A SERIES OF ELECTORAL SUCCESSES--SYNDICALS; MUNICIPALS; NATIONALS--WHICH FIRMLY ESTABLISH THE PARTY'S LEGITIMACY AND PROVIDE IT THE NECESSARY LABOR BASE AND INSTITUTIONALIZED PROVINCIAL/MUNICIPAL PRESENCE. WHILE SOME PSOE FIGURES TALK OF A SOCIALIST GOVT EVEN BEFORE THE CONVENING OF NEW NATIONAL ELECTIONS, COOLER HEADS REALIZE THIS WOULD IMPLY A WORSENING OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH WOULD BE IN NEITHER THE COUNTRY'S NOR THE PARTY'S ABILITY TO GOVERN. CONSEQUENTLY, WHILE THE

PSOE IS ATTEMPTING TO PREPARE ITSELF FOR SUCH AN EVENTUALITY, A STAGED ELECTORAL PATH IS THE GREATLY PREFERRED ROAD TO POWER.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL PROGRESS. INTERNALLY, THE PSOE'S

OPTIMISM IS BASED ON ITS PROGRESS IN PARTY BUILDING AND ON THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP'S MASTERY OF ITS OWN HOUSE. THE PSOE NOW HAS 200,000 DUES-PAYING MEMBERS, GROUPE IN FUNCTIONING REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT SPAIN. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EFFERVESCENCE IN MANY OF THESE GROUPINGS, OFTEN LEADING TO LOCAL LEADERSHIP SHUFFLES. BUT THIS APPEARS TO BE A MANIFESTATION OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY AND THE NATURAL GROWING PAINS OF A YOUNG PARTY, RATHER THAN A SYMPTOM

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OF INTERNECINE CONFLICT OR LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP. IN FACT, THE 19-MEMBER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC), UNDER ITS UNDISPUTED LEADER, PARTY SEC GEN FELIPE GONZALEZ, APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MINIMIZE INTERNAL FRICTION AND BACK-BITING. ONLY A FEW HAVE SPLIT OFF FROM THE PARTY TO PROTEST THE LEADERSHIP'S "MODERATE, REFORMIST" COURSE.

6. THE EC IN CONTROL. DURING THE DECEMBER 1976 PARTY CONGRESS GONZALEZ SECURED FOR THE EC A BROAD MANDATE

PERMITTING THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERABLE MANEUVERING ROOM.
MOREOVER, ITS DECISIONS, INCLUDING THOSE IN SUPPORT OF
THE "MONCLOA PACT," HAVE CONSISTENTLY BEEN RATIFIED BY
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OVERWHELMING MAJORITIES IN THE PSOE'S 93-MEMBER FEDERAL
COMMITTEE (FC). (THE FC THEORETICALLY IS THE PARTY'S
"MAXIMUM ORGANISM" BETWEEN BIENNIAL CONGRESSES, BUT IT
MEETS COMPARATIVELY INFREQUENTLY--BY STATUTE, AT LEAST
ONCE EVERY FOUR MONTHS--AND THE EXECUTIVE CONTINUES TO
DEMONSTRATE THAT IT IS VERY MUCH IN CHARGE OF THE FC'S
PROCEEDINGS AND DOMINANT IN ITS DECISION-MAKING.) EVEN
SO, THERE IS CONSISTENT OPPOSITION FROM A SMALL, MORE
LEFTIST MINORITY WITHIN THE FC, CURRENTLY LED BY MADRID
MAVERICK PABLO CASTELLANO, WHICH APPEARS MOTIVATED BOTH
BY IDEOLOGY AND PERSONAL AMBITION, AND WHOSE STRENGTH
COULD CONCEIVABLY GROW IF THE LEADERSHIP MISSTEPS.

7. WHO'S WHO. ALTHOUGH THE EC IS A COLLEGIUM WHICH
OPERATES ON THE PRINCIPLE OF ONE MAN, ONE VOTE, FELIPE
GONZALEZ CLEARLY IS THE SINGLE MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBER.
HE HAS NO DEPUTY OR SECOND SECRETARY AND IF HE SHOULD
LEAVE THE SCENE IT IS NOT CLEAR WHO WOULD SUCCEED HIM.
DECISIONS USUALLY ARE TAKEN BY CONSENSUS, ALTHOUGH IF THIS
IS NOT POSSIBLE A SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTE DECIDES. THE EC
AS A WHOLE REPRESENTS BOTH AN IDEOLOGICAL AND
GEOGRAPHICAL BALANCE OF SORTS, BUT THE CORE GROUP CON-
SISTS OF GONZALEZ, ALFONSO GUERRA, ENRIQUE MUGICA, LUIS
GOMEZ LLORENTE, AND JAVIER SOLANA. ALTHOUGH GOMEZ
LLORENTE AND GUERRA ARE CONSIDERED THE MORE LEFTIST
MEMBERS OF THE LEADERSHIP, THERE APPEAR TO BE FEW, IF
ANY, IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE EC. IN ANY
CASE, THERE IS A GENERAL CONSENSUS WITHIN THE PSOE
LEADERSHIP THAT SPAIN'S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY SHOULD ONLY
BE TRANSFORMED BY DEMOCRATIC MEANS.

8. THIS CONSENSUS COMES AS NO SURPRISE, SINCE THE EC IS
LARGELY A SELF-SELECTING BODY. IT CONSISTS OF THE SLATE
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OF CANDIDATES PRESENTED TO THE DECEMBER 1976 CONGRESS
BY THE INCUMBENT LEADERSHIP, AND IT INCLUDES 8 CARRY-OVER
MEMBERS (THE PRE-CONGRESS EC CONSISTED OF ONLY 11),
PLUS 11 NEW MEMBERS IN EFFECT CHOSEN BY THEM. THE FC
IS ALSO COMPARATIVELY MALLEABLE. ITS MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES
THE 19 EC MEMBERS, PLUS 74 OTHER REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL

LEADERS SCATTERED AROUND THE COUNTRY WHO HAVE LITTLE OPPORTUNITY AND, AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, NO INCLINATION TO PLOT AGAINST THE EC.

9. PRAGMATISM AND SUPPORT FOR REFORM. THE PSOE'S DOMESTIC PERFORMANCE SINCE THE 1977 ELECTION HAS BEEN CRAFTED ON THE BASIS OF A COMBINATION OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AMONG THEM:

--THE PARTY'S ELECTORAL MANDATE, WHICH FLOWED FROM ITS LARGELY MODERATE CAMPAIGN;

--AN APPRECIATION OF SPANISH POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REALITY, INCLUDING THE VARIOUS FORCES WHICH CONDITION POLITICAL BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS THE CIVIL WAR HERITAGE, THE CONSERVATIVE OUTLOOK OF THE SPANISH MILITARY, THE COMPARATIVE HOSTILITY OF ENTRENCHED FINANCIAL INTERESTS, AND THE MODERATING INFLUENCE OF SOME OF THEIR SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC COLLEAGUES, ESPECIALLY THE GERMANS; AND

--A COMMITMENT TO THE CONSOLIDATION OF SPANISH DEMOCRACY WHICH THE PSOE LEADERSHIP FEELS MUST OBVIOUSLY TAKE PLACE BEFORE IT CAN PROCEED WITH THE TRANSFORMATION OF FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS.
10. OTHER FACTORS WHICH HAVE CONDITIONED THE PSOE'S PERFORMANCE, SOME OF THEM TRANSITORY, BUT OTHERS LONGER LASTING, INCLUDE:

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--INEXPERIENCE: EXCEPT FOR 711YEAR-OLD DSOE ERESIDENT RAMON RUBIAL, EC MEMBERS AVERAGE ABOUT 36 YEARS OF AGE. THE PARTY WAS ONLY LEGALIZED ON FEBRUARY 17, 1977, AND THEY CONSEQUENTLY HAVE FUNCTIONED OPENLY AND IN A RELATIVELY NORMAL DEMOCRATIC CONTEXT FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR;

--A MIND SET STILL CONDITIONED BY THE FACT THAT ALL OF THESE YOUNG LEADERS CAME OF POLITICAL AGE DURING THE PARTY'S CLANDESTINITY. MOST OF THEM HAD BEEN ARRESTED AT LEAST ONCE AND SOME HAVE SERVED PRISON SENTENCES DURING THE FRANCO YEARS FOR ENGAGING IN PROHIBITED POLITICAL ACTIVITY. THEY UNDERSTANDABLY TEND TO BE BITTER TOWARD CONFIDENTIAL

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THE OLD REGIME AND THOSE POLITICIANS, INCLUDING SUAREZ HIMSELF, WHO WERE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH IT. (MANY OF THEM HAVE STRONG PREJUDICES AGAINST THOSE THEY CONSIDER TO BE FOREIGN SUPPORTERS OF FRANCO AS WELL.)

--FUNDAMENTAL IDEOLOGICAL PROCLIVITIES AND THE DEEPLY ROOTED CONVICTION THAT SPAIN'S ECONOMY AND SOCIETY MUST BE TRANSFORMED BECAUSE THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLASSES ARE TOO GREAT TO BE RESOLVED SATISFACT-ORILY BY SIMPLY FINE TUNING OR MORE EFFECTIVELY ADMINISTER-ING THE EXISTING SYSTEM.

11. THESE SOMETIMES CONFLICTING CONSIDERATIONS, WHEN COMBINED WITH THE RELATIVE PRAGMATISM OF FELIPE GONZALEZ AND MOST OF THE REST OF THE PSOE LEADERSHIP, HAVE RESULTED ON BALANCE IN A BASICALLY TRANSACTIONAL, ALBEIT TOUGH, PSOE APPROACH TO MOST ISSUES. EVEN SO, THE LEADERSHIP HAS PREDICTABLY FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE TWO BASIC DICHOTOMIES: RELATIVELY RADICAL BASE/ RELATIVELY MODERATE ELECTORATE; AND SHORT-TERM SUPPORT FOR REFORM/ LONG-TERM ADVOCACY OF FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY, IT HAS SOMETIMES BEHAVED AMBIGUOUSLY AND EVEN IN AN INTERNALLY CONTRADICTIONARY MANNER, AS IT HAS ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IT SUPPORTS FOR NOW AND WHAT IT INSISTS ON FOR THE MORE DISTANT FUTURE. THIS HAS LED MANY IN UCD TO ACCUSE IT OF BEING AN UNSALVAGEABLE "ANTI SYSTEM"

PARTY, WHILE ITS ENEMIES ON THE LEFT HAVE SIMULTANEOUSLY CHARGED PSOE WITH HAVING BETRAYED ITS COMMITMENT TO FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE.

12. THE PSOE AND UCD. THE THRUST OF PSOE POLICY SINCE THE ELECTIONS HAS BEEN TO PURSUE A ROLE AS A RESPONSIBLE CONFIDENTIAL

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POLITICAL ADVERSARY OF, AND GOVERNING ALTERNATIVE TO, SUAREZ AND THE UCD, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME COOPERATING WITH THE GOVT AND OTHER PARTIES IN LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR STABLE DEMOCRACY IN SPAIN. THIS APPROACH HAS COMBINED THE PURSUIT OF CONSENSUS ON SOME ISSUES, SUCH AS THE CONSTITUTION, PUBLIC ORDER AND REGIONAL AUTONOMY, WITH OFTEN SCATHING CRITICISM OF GOVT INITIATIVES. IT INVOLVES CONTINUING EFFORTS BY THE PSOE TO AMEND GOVT-INTRODUCED LEGISLATION IN ORDER TO MAKE IT AS "PROGRESSIVE" AS POSSIBLE, OR TO GRAB THE LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS ITSELF. THIS COOPERATION/COMPETITION RELATIONSHIP, IN FACT, REFLECTS AN AMBIVALENCE ON THE PSOE'S PART AS BETWEEN DESIRING TO WEAKEN UCD IN ORDER TO FACILITATE THE SOCIALISTS' ACCESSION TO POWER (E.G., THROUGH OVERTURES TO UCD "PROGRESSIVES") AND THE RECOGNITION THAT SPANISH DEMOCRACY MUST ULTIMATELY DEPEND ON THE EXISTENCE OF A HEALTHY CENTER/CENTER-RIGHT OPTION WHICH CAN MOBILIZE PARTICIPATION AND PROVIDE ITS ELECTORATE WITH A SENSE OF POLITICAL EFFICACY. PSOE LEADERS CONTINUE TO VIEW UCD AS TOO INTERNALLY DIVIDED EITHER TO GOVERN ABLY OR COME TOGETHER AS A COHERENT, LONG-TERM POLITICAL OPTION. THEY CONTINUE TO SEE UCD AS AN ARTIFICIAL AND TRANSITORY COALITION OF DEMOCRATS AND NON-DEMOCRATS WHICH WILL FLY APART AFTER ITS FIRST ELECTORAL REVERSE.

13. HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL INITIATIVE LIES VERY MUCH WITH SUAREZ AND UCD, AND THE PSOE'S CHANCES OF ACCEDING TO POWER CONTINUE TO DEPEND AS MUCH ON SUAREZ' GOVERNING ABILITY AND UCD'S PROGRESS IN PARTY BUILDING AS THEY DO ON ANYTHING THE PSOE ITSELF DOES OR DOES NOT DO. THE PSOE THEREFORE WILL CONTINUE TO ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE ITS

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OWN ERRORS AS WELL AS TO TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF THE GOVT'S. BUT ITS BEHAVIOR WILL ALSO CONTINUE TO BE CONDITIONED BY THE REALIZATION THAT, WHILE IT DOES NOT WANT TO SEE A TOO-SUCCESSFUL SUAREZ, NEITHER DOES IT HAVE ANY INTEREST IN A DETERIORATION OF THE POLITICAL/ECONOMIC SITUATION WHICH COULD IMPERIL SPANISH DEMOCRACY. THIS HAS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A POWERFUL FACTOR IN FAVOR OF ACCOMMODATION IN ANY REAL CRUNCH, RHETORIC NOTWITHSTANDING. AT THE SAME TIME, CONSIDERABLE MUTUAL DISTRUST WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY CONTINUE TO CHARACTERIZE THE RELATIONSHIP. PSOE LEADERS WILL PERSIST IN CASTING ASPERSIONS AT UCD'S DEMOCRATIC CREDENTIALS AND UCD WILL CONTINUE TO PORTRAY THE PSOE, PARTLY FOR EFFECT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PARTLY OUT OF CONVICTION, AS A CONGENITALLY IMMATURE CORPS OF YOUNG JACOBINS UNPREPARED TO GOVERN UNTIL THEY HAVE "GONE TO BAD GODESBERG," A JOURNEY THE PSOE IS NOT NOW CONTEMPLATING.

14. THE PSOE AND THE PCE. THE NEED FOR THE PSOE TO BURNISH ITS OPPOSITION CREDENTIALS HAS SOMETIMES CAUSED THE PARTY TO LOSE THE POLITICAL INITIATIVE ON THE LEFT TO THE PCE. THIS WAS NOWHERE MORE EVIDENT THAN IN THE "MONCLOA PACT," WHERE ACCOMMODATING, LEGITIMACY-SEEKING PCE

SECGEN SANTIAGO CARRILLO AND SUAREZ REACHED AN AGREEMENT WITH WHICH THE PSOE WAS THEN POLITICALLY COMPELLED TO IDENTIFY ITSELF. THE PCE, IN FACT, HAS TACTICALLY ASSUMED THE POSITION OF A CENTER-LEFT PARTY, TRIED TO INSERT ITSELF BETWEEN UCD AND THE PSOE, AND OFTEN APPEARED MORE AS THE GOVT'S AGENT THAN ITS MOST RADICAL POLITICAL OPPONENT. IT HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN ABLE TO APPROPRIATE FOR ITSELF THE ROLE OF THE GOVT'S "RESPONSIBLE INTERLOCUTOR ON THE LEFT, DESPITE ITS MODEST ELECTORAL SHOWING, PRECISELY BECAUSE CARRILLO HAS PLACED SUCH EMPHASIS ON ACCOMMODATION AND DOES NOT HAVE TO CONCERN HIMSELF ABOUT CHARGES OF HAVING BEEN COOPTED.

15. HARSH PSOE RHETORIC AIMED AT THE PCE FOR ITS LACK OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM, AND THE PSOE'S CLEAR DESIRE TO ATTEMPT TO GO IT ALONE ON THE LEFT SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, OBSCURE THE FACT THAT CARRILLO'S PURSUIT OF LEGITIMACY THROUGH MODERATION HAS NOT ONLY BEEN A POSITIVE FACTOR IN THE SPANISH TRANSITION GENERALLY. IT ALSO HAS:

--ON THE ONE HAND, REDUCED PRESSURE ON THE PSOE'S LEFT WING, THEREBY ELIMINATING A DRAG ON THE PARTY'S MATURATION-
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TION PROCESS AND EFFECTIVELY ASSISTING THE PSOE LEADERSHIP TO KEEP THE PARTY IN LINE; AND, ON THE OTHER

--ON SPECIFIC SHORT OR MEDIUM-TERM ISSUES LARGELY OBLITERATED THE POLICY LINE DIVIDING SPANISH SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM.

16. EVEN IF THE PCE DOES NOT, AS CARRILLO ADVERTISED IN THE US, ABANDON LENINISM AT ITS COMING CONGRESS, ITS CULTIVATION OF AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST IMAGE, ITS TACTICAL MODERATION AND AT LEAST PROGRAMMATIC CONVERGENCE WITH THE PSOE--NOT TO MENTION ITS STRONG BASE IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT--COULD PUT STRONG PRESSURES ON THE PSOE LEADERSHIP TOWARD SOME SORT OF COLLABORATION ON THE SPANISH LEFT. THIS COLLABORATION WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT TAKE THE FORM OF ORGANIC UNITY, BUT WOULD RATHER CONSIST OF SOME TYPE OF TACTICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC AGREEMENT. IN THE SHORT RUN, MUCH IS LIKELY TO DEPEND ON THE OUTCOME OF THE MUNICIPAL AND THE SYNDICAL ELECTIONS. IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR AT THIS STAGE THAT THE PSOE' LABOR AFFILIATE, THE UGT, WILL RECEIVE THE STRONG LABOR MANDATE IT SEEKS. MOREOVER, THE UGT ITSELF HAS YET TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT CAN IMPOSE DISCIPLINE ON THE 1.3 MILLION MEMBERS IT ALREADY CLAIMS. WITHOUT SUCH A SYNDICAL VICTORY, THE PSOE'S BALLYHOOED GOAL OF A PECULIARLY SPANISH POLITICAL MODEL FEATURING A SOCIALISM

FREE OF ANY NEED FOR COMMUNIST LABOR BACKING WOULD BE GRAVELY ENDANGERED.

17. THE PSOE'S ELECTORATE. ALTHOUGH COMPLETE ELECTORAL DATA ARE STILL UNAVAILABLE, THE PSOE'S ELECTORATE APPEARS ON THE BASIS OF STUDIES WE HAVE SEEN, TO BE LARGELY WORKING CLASS, COMBINED WITH A SUBSTANTIAL MINORITY OF MIDDLE CLASS AND EVEN A SMATTERING OF UPPER CLASS VOTERS. ITS STRONGEST SUPPORT IS CONCENTRATED IN URBAN WORKING

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CLASS QUARTERS (LIKE MADRID'S VALLECAS AND MEDIODIA, WHERE THE PSOE GARNERED ALMOST 50 PERCENT OF THE VOTE). THIS REINFORCES THE "CLASS" ELEMENT IN THE PARTY'S APPROACH AND THE LEADERSHIP'S CONVICTION THAT, WHILE ITS ELECTORATE DOES NOT WANT ANY POLITICAL ADVENTURES, IT DOES SUPPORT AND WILL BENEFIT FROM LONG TERM SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS. (INTERESTINGLY, GOVT POLLSTER JUAN DIEZ NICOLAS TOLD US JANUARY 13 THAT UCD POLLS INDICATE THE MEDIAN INCOME OF THE PCE VOTER IS HIGHER THAN THAT OF EITHER THE AVERAGE PSOE OR UCD VOTER.) THE PSOE'S ELECTORATE APPEARS TO BE STABLE, AND POST-ELECTION POLLS

WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE NO MEASURABLE SEEPAGE OF PSOE
VOTES TO EITHER THE PCE OR UCD.
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18. THE ROAD TO POWER. PSOE LEADERS BELIEVE THAT THE ELECTORAL PATH TO POWER WILL LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE, AND THAT THE NEXT NATIONAL ELECTIONS WILL PROPEL THEM INTO OFFICE. THE SCENARIO THEY OUTLINE IS NOT ENTIRELY IMPROBABLE. THEY POINT OUT THAT THERE WAS LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UCD'S JUNE 15, 1977 VOTE (6,220,889) AND THE TOTAL SOCIALIST VOTE INCLUDING THE THIRD-WORLD ORIENTED POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY OF PROFESSOR TIerno GALVAN (6,039,840--5,240,464 (PSOE) PLUS 799,376 (PSP/US). THEY ASSUME THAT MUCH OF THE PSP/US VOTE WILL GO TO THE PSOE THE NEXT TIME AROUND. A NUMBER OF PSP ORGANIZATIONS IN FACT HAVE ALREADY DISINTEGRATED, WITH MANY OF THEIR MEMBERS PASSING TO THE PSOE. FURTHERMORE, THE SPANISH VOTER HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT HE LIKES TO MAKE HIS BALLOT COUNT. THE PSOE LEADERS BELIEVE THEY WILL ACHIEVE A PLURALITY AS THE RESULT OF GAINS AT THE EXPENSE OF UCD AND THE LAST MINUTE PRO-PSOE VOTING DECISION OF MANY UNDECIDEDS, COMBINED WITH A GREATER ABSTENTION RATE AMONG THOSE WHO NORMALLY WOULD VOTE UCD. THEY FEEL THAT THEY ARE CERTAIN TO DO VERY WELL IN THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND THAT THIS WILL HAVE A BANDWAGON EFFECT ON UNDECIDED VOTERS. (FOR THIS SAME REASON A NUMBER OF LOCAL POLITICAL OBSERVERS ARE NOW PREDICTING THAT SUAREZ WILL DECIDE TO HOLD NATIONAL ELECTIONS AFTER THE CONSTITUTION IS RATIFIED AND BEFORE THE MUNICIPALS ARE CONVENED.)

19. BUT THE PSOE CANNOT REALISTICALLY HOPE FOR MORE THAN A PARLIAMENTARY PLURALITY, EVEN THOUGH THE MANNER IN WHICH SPAIN'S "PR" SYSTEM REWARDS SUCCESS--E.G., UCD, WITH 34 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, HOLDS 47 PERCENT OF THE LOWER HOUSE SEATS--CAN CREATE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITIES OUT OF ELECTORAL PLURALITIES. THUS, ANY POST-ELECTION
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GOVT WOULD MOST LIKELY BE:

--EITHER A MINORITY PSOE GOVT DEPENDENT ON COMMITTED PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FROM OTHER PARTIES AS IS THE CASE NOW WITH THE GOVERNING UCD;

--OR A PSOE-LED MAJORITY COALITION, PROBABLY INCLUD-

ING REGIONAL CENTER AND CENTER-LEFT GROUPINGS.

IN EITHER OF THESE CASES, THE PSOE WOULD EXPECT AND WORK HARD TO ENGENDER A SPLINTERING OF UCD, WHEREBY UCD "PROGRESSIVES," PARTICULARLY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, WOULD SUPPORT--AND PERHAPS PARTICIPATE IN--THE PSOE GOVT. THE PSOE CLEARLY PREFERS THE BACKING OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CENTRISTS AND CENTER-LEFTISTS TO ANY PARLIAMENTARY DEPENDENCY ON THE PCE.

20. THERE IS A REAL QUESTION IN THE MINDS OF MOST LOCAL OBSERVERS AS TO WHETHER THE PSOE WOULD BE QUALIFIED TO GOVERN SPAIN. HOWEVER, ALTHOUGH IT IS UNDERSTANDABLY THIN IN MANY AREAS--PERHAPS ITS MOST GLARING WEAKNESSES ARE IN THE FOREIGN POLICY FIELD--IT HAS MANY QUALIFIED PEOPLE, BOTH AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND CENTER LEFT/LEFT INDEPENDENTS AND MINORITY SOCIALISTS, WHO WOULD BE READY TO DO ITS POLITICAL BIDDING. FURTHERMORE, IT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE LITTLE TROUBLE WITH THE EXISTING BUREAUCRACY, PARTICULARLY IF IT CONTINUED PRAGMATIC, GRADUALIST POLICIES. AND IF THE SOCIALISTS HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE KING FOR FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT--AS THEY PRESUMABLY WOULD IF THEY WERE THE VICTORS IN A DEMOCRATIC ELECTION--THE ARMED FORCES WOULD PROBABLY DECIDE TO STAY OUT OF POLITICS. THE UNANSWERABLE QUESTIONS AT THIS POINT OBVIOUSLY DERIVE FROM THE DISPARATE POLITICAL PRESSURES ON SUCH A GOVT, BOTH

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AMEMBASSY ROME
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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

FROM WITHIN THE PSOE AND FROM WITHOUT, AND THE ABILITY
OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP TO COPE WITH SUCH PRESSURES.

21. IN SUM, IN THE SHORT SPACE OF LESS THAN A YEAR THE
PSOE HAS TRANSFORMED ITSELF FROM A SEMI-LEGAL POLITICAL
GROUPING INTO A MAJOR POLITICAL PARTY WITH AN EFFECTIVE
ORGANIZATIONAL BASE, DEDICATED CADRES, AND FIRM DIREC-
TION. THE SMELL OF POWER IS A HEADY SENSATION AND IT
IS TO THE CREDIT OF THE YOUNG PSOE LEADERSHIP THAT THEY
HAVE NOT SERIOUSLY STUMBLER UNDER ITS INFLUENCE.
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